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WST 2309-003: Women, Men, and Culture

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Women's Studies 2309G / Fall 2006

Women, Men, and Culture

Dr. Angela Vietto
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Class web site:
<http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfarv/2309.html>

Office hours:
MWF 9-10:30 AND BY APPOINTMENT
(You can make an appointment by seeing me
before or after class OR by signing up on the
appointment schedule on my office door.)

Course Objectives

This course is designed to introduce you to gender issues and related topics in contemporary society and in historical context.

By the end of the course, you should be able to

- articulate your viewpoint(s) in relation to gender issues in a variety of disciplines
- describe some of the ways political, social, economic, and/or religious factors influence gender role development
- describe some ways values pertaining to gender differ across as well as within culture
- articulate your understanding of the role of a responsible citizen in relation to issues of gender, race, and culture

In addition, because this is a general education course, the course should help you improve your communication skills (both written and spoken), your critical thinking skills, and your awareness of issues related to global citizenship.

Why do we need to study gender issues?

Even if we never think about it, every one of us is affected by expectations and demands created by the ways our cultures understand gender. Studying gender, then, can improve our understanding of ourselves as well as our relationship to the societies in which we live. Since the people with whom we live and work are affected by these issues as well, there can be some very practical benefits to studying gender in a systematic way. Very few people *never* think about or talk about—theorize—gender, but a course like this one can allow you to think and talk in an educated way, with an awareness of the forces that have shaped your attitudes and knowledge.

Texts to be issued by TRS

Kesselman, McNair, and Schniedewind, *Women: Images and Realities*

Kirk and Okazawa-Rey, *Women's Lives: Multicultural Perspectives*

Additional materials will be supplied by the instructor.

What will we be doing in this course?

A detailed reading schedule will be distributed during the second week of class. Following are deadlines and other notable dates in our schedule:

R Sept. 28—Essay 1 due

R Oct. 5—Mid-term exam

T Oct. 17—Team Project 1 due

T Nov. 14—Team Project 2 due

Nov. 20-24—No class (Thanksgiving)

T Dec. 5—Essay 2 due

T Dec. 12, 2:45-4:45—Final exam

In general, here's what you can expect if you decide to commit to this class.

Our classroom **discussions** will be essential to your learning. We will spend time actively working on the skills that allow you to be a meaningful and responsible participant in discussions that can sometimes be difficult; we will also have some structured discussions, including round tables and other more formal speaking situations, such as short reports on your independent work.

Homework assignments will include reading, writing, and a variety of kinds of research. We will also spend some time writing in class, and those assignments will also be counted in your homework grade.

In addition, we will divide the class into teams investigating particular topics, and you will complete two **team projects**.

Individually, you will also write two **formal essays**, which will require you to use your research and analytical skills to write in ways that both express your personal viewpoint and demonstrate that you have examined your personal beliefs in relationship to credible evidence.

Assignments and Grading

Final Grades

Participation	20%	A	90% or above
Homework/In-class writing	20%	B	80% to 89%
Essay 1	10%	C	70% to 79%
Essay 2	10%	D	60% to 69%
Team Project 1	10%	F	59% or below
Team Project 2	10%		
Mid-Term Exam	10%		
Final Exam	10%		

Homework and in-class writings will be worth variable numbers of points. At the end of the semester, I will total the points available and divide your total by the total available to determine your homework/in-class writing grade. If you miss class, homework that was due for the class you missed is due the day you return to class. In-class writings may also be made up; see me to arrange for that when you return to class.

Participation in class discussion and other activities is critical to your learning. You don't have to be a genius to make a meaningful contribution to a discussion. All I ask is that you make a good faith effort to take part in discussion and activities. Show up regularly (just about every day) and make a real effort and you'll receive full credit here.

Attendance. When you miss class, you disadvantage both yourself and your classmates. However, coming to class is your decision. The only days when you need to provide me with documentation if you miss class are the days of the mid-term and final exams. However, you should note the following: (a) It's your job to find out, from me or a classmate or the class web site, what you've missed and make that work up. (b) Missing a lot of class will inevitably hurt your participation grade. (c) When you're turning something in late, turn it in during class or in my office hours. (Please don't email me assignments.)

Exams. The mid-term and final exams will both be comprehensive (that is, they will evaluate your progress toward meeting the overall goals of the course). So you can think of the mid-term as practice for the final. If you work steadily throughout the semester, then, you should do better on the final than on the mid-term. In that case, your final exam grade will be doubled and take the place of your mid-term exam grade.

Essays. Each essay will require research and critical thinking. That means that doing a good job will require time, planning, and effort. In addition to the final deadlines for each essay, listed above, I will give homework assignments related to each essay; keeping up with these shorter assignments will help you do well on the essays. I am willing to review drafts of essays before the due date, but if you want me to look at a draft you must also meet with me to discuss it.

Team Projects. Your team projects will require that you genuinely work as a team, because they will be too large for one person to complete on her or his own. I will give you some time in class to organize your team projects, but you might also need to meet outside of class.

Information for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Electronic Writing Portfolio

This course is writing intensive. *If you are neither a 1st-year student nor a senior*, that means you may use an essay from this class for your electronic writing portfolio. I will sign EWP forms for any completed essay throughout the semester, but if you have not had one signed by the final exam, I will require that you bring the form to the final exam, even if you do not believe you need it.

The English Department's Statement on Plagiarism

"Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work' (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

My Statement on Plagiarism

I assume that you want your learning experience to be meaningful—which means I assume that you don't want to plagiarize. On the other hand, I've been given plagiarized work by quite a number of students in my time at EIU. *If you're tempted to plagiarize due to time constraints or other pressures, ask me for an extension instead. If you have any doubts in your mind about whether your use of sources is okay, ask me ahead of time.*

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Women, Men, and Culture
Schedule (subject to change)
Updated 9/19

T Sept 19	Putting together your essay; team projects; mid-term exam
R Sept 21	Mandatory team meetings in class; essay drafts may be brought for review
T Sept 26	Mandatory team meetings in class; essay drafts may be brought for review
R Sept 28	<i>Due: Essay 1; brief oral reports from class members on essay 1</i>
T Oct 3	Mandatory team meetings in class; review for mid-term exam
R Oct 5	<i>Mid-term exam.</i> If absent, you must document in writing (from a credible source other than yourself) a serious, unexpected illness or emergency that prevented your attendance in order to be eligible to make up the exam.
T Oct 10	<i>Teams' reading assignments for oral presentation days due to instructor.</i>
R Oct 12	Reading assignments for Oct 17-Nov 4 distributed. Team meetings in class.
T Oct 17	<i>Team project 1 due (written portion). Team 1 presentation: Sexuality</i> (reading to be assigned)
R Oct 19	<i>Team 2 presentation: Marriage</i> (reading to be assigned)
T Oct 24	<i>Team 3 presentation: Parenthood</i> (reading to be assigned)
R Oct 26	<i>Team 4 presentation: Body Image</i> (reading to be assigned)
T Oct 31	<i>Team 5 presentation: Sex Workers</i> (reading to be assigned)
R Nov 2	<i>Team 6 presentation: Violence against Women</i> (reading to be assigned)
T Nov 7	<i>Team 7 presentation: History of Feminism/Gender Roles</i> (reading to be assigned)
R Nov 9	Organization of second team projects. Essay 2 assigned.
T Nov 14	Mandatory team meetings.
R Nov 16	No class; mandatory individual conferences on Essay 2.
Thanksgiving Break	

T Nov 28	TBA
R Nov 30	TBA
T Dec 5	<i>Essay 2 due; brief reports on Essay 2.</i>
R Dec 7	<i>Team Project 2 due (written portion).</i> Review for final exam.
T Dec 12 2:45-4:45	<i>Final exam</i>

Essay One: Gender at Work

In this essay you will research, describe, and analyze important ways in which gender might influence your work after college.

Your research must make use of the full range of relevant resources available through Booth Library (including books, academic articles, and news articles). We will talk about resources you should consult during your first conference regarding this paper. You may also use other sources, but you may not ignore relevant resources available to you at the library.

You must document your use of sources, and you must not plagiarize (that is, you must not represent someone else's words or ideas as your own). You may use either APA or MLA style to document your sources.

Your essay may be divided into sections with headings if you like. It must include an introduction and conclusion. Personal reflection on what you learn is certainly encouraged, but summarizing what you learn in your research is essential.

This essay should be 5-6 pages long (not counting bibliography). It must be typed, double spaced, printed clearly, and stapled or paper clipped together. Do not email your paper to me.

Note:

Booth Library is offering library orientation tours between Aug. 21 and Sept. 27. Tours meet in the library's North Foyer on Mondays at 6 p.m., Tuesdays at 11 a.m. and Wednesdays at 5 p.m. Sessions last approximately 45 minutes.

Tips for Putting Together Your Essay

Title: Have one. Good titles are both informative and interesting. They should tell us more than the general topic.

Introduction: Don't ramble. Describe the topic of your essay; try to state in one sentence the main point of your essay; and preview the sub-topics that will be covered in the body of the essay.

Conclusion: Don't just repeat the introduction. Restate the main point of the essay, and then answer the question: So what?

Body:

1. Organization counts. Paragraphs should have topic sentences that provide a transition from one paragraph to the next. Headings may be used to divide the essay into sections if you like.
2. Handling sources. You don't need to repeat all the information about a source when you cite or quote from a source (all the information should be in the bibliography). Usually the author's name is good enough, along with a page number if you are using a specific piece of information. So, for example, let's say I quote from an article in a scholarly journal:

GOOD: Rita Ciresi claims that "because English is seen as a feminine field, students respect women English professors more" (20).

TOO MUCH DETAIL: Rita Ciresi, author of "The Feminization of English," which appeared in *Pedagogy* in spring 2006, claims that "because English is seen as a feminine field, students respect women English professors more" (20).

DO NOT use a web address (URL) in the body of your paper. The ONLY place web addresses should appear is in your bibliography. Say, for example, I quote from the web site of the Modern Language Association.

GOOD: According to the Modern Language Association, "Since 1996, 30% more women than men have earned Ph.D.s in English."

DO NOT: According to www.mla.org, "Since 1996, 30% more women than men have earned Ph.D.s in English."

3. After you have drafted your paper, try reading it out loud. If you stumble over a sentence, chances are it's hard to follow. Try rephrasing the sentence as if you were talking with a friend.
4. Grammar and mechanics count. Problems? Bring a draft to class next week and/or visit the Writing Center.

Bibliography: Use either MLA or APA style for your bibliography. Web addresses come LAST in bibliography entries.

Women, Men, and Culture *Schedule (Updated 10/12)*

Note well: Assigned readings for team presentations are subject to quizzes and short writings from the instructor, and these readings WILL turn up on the final exam.

- R Oct 12 Reading assignments for Oct 17-Nov 4 distributed. Team meetings in class.
- T Oct 17 **Team project 1 due for all teams (written portion).**
Team 1 presentation: Sexuality
Reading in *Women's Lives*: pp. 143-171
- R Oct 19 *Team 2 presentation: Marriage*
Reading in *Women's Lives*: pp. 282-285
- T Oct 24 *Team 3 presentation: Parenthood*
Reading in *Women: Images and Realities* pp. 250-256
Revisions of Essay One Due
- R Oct 26 *Team 4 presentation: Body Image*
Reading in *Women: Images and Realities* pp. 123-137
Essay Two assigned
- T Oct 31 *Team 5 presentation: Sex Workers*
Packet to be distributed by instructor
- R Nov 2 *Team 6 presentation: Violence against Women*
Reading in *Women: Images and Realities* pp. 448-454, 462-464, 477-481
- T Nov 7 *Team 7 presentation: History of Feminism/Gender Roles*
Reading in *Women: Images and Realities* pp. 550-557
- R Nov 9 Organization of second team projects.
- T Nov 14 Mandatory team meetings.
- R Nov 16 No class; mandatory individual conferences on Essay 2.
- Thanksgiving Break
- T Nov 28-R Nov 30 TBA
- T Dec 5 *Essay 2 due; brief reports on Essay 2.*
- R Dec 7 *Team Project 2 due (written portion).* Review for final exam.
- T Dec 12 *Final exam*
2:45-4:45